

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 212

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor E.W. "Bud" Wendell, President and Chief Executive Officer of Gaylord Entertainment Company, on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to an exemplary professional and dedicated public servant who has played a major role in the unprecedented growth of the country music industry, both in Nashville and worldwide; and

WHEREAS, throughout a meritorious career that has spanned nearly fifty years and has witnessed numerous economic, social and cultural changes in Nashville and the country music industry, E.W. "Bud" Wendell has distinguished himself by means of his astute and loyal service to the Gaylord Entertainment Company, Opryland USA and its predecessor companies: WSM, Inc., NLT Corporation and National Life and Accident Insurance Company; and

WHEREAS, Bud Wendell recently took a much deserved retirement as President and Chief Executive Officer of Gaylord Entertainment Company, a position from which he helped to catapult country music to the all-time popularity it enjoys today; and

WHEREAS, under Mr. Wendell's inspired leadership, Gaylord Entertainment has built a unique country music empire that provides broad support and exposure for both the music and its artists worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the overwhelming popularity and huge viewership of The Nashville Network and Country Music Television, both here and abroad, resulted in Mr. Wendell spearheading the expansion of CMT International into the Asia-Pacific region and Latin America; and

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WHEREAS, all of Gaylord's properties have thrived under Mr. Wendell's sagacious guidance throughout his more than forty-eight years with the company; and

WHEREAS, during this time, he has served with acumen and intelligence as the general manager of the Grand Ole Opry and Opryland theme park; and

WHEREAS, as manager of the Grand Ole Opry, he oversaw the relocation of the nation's longest-running live radio show from the historic Ryman Auditorium to its current location at the Opryland USA entertainment resort; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, under Mr. Wendell's able tutelage, Gaylord reopened the 102-year-old Ryman Auditorium, following an 8.5 million dollar renovation and opened the 7.5 million dollar Wildhorse Saloon, a country music dance club and television production facility on historic Second Avenue in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wendell began his illustrious career by selling insurance door-to-door as a salesman for National Life and Accident Insurance Company in Hamilton, Ohio; he was transferred in 1962 to National Life's home office in Nashville as an agency supervisor; and

WHEREAS, he next served adroitly as an administrative assistant to WSM, Inc.'s president, Jack DeWitt until 1968, when he was deservedly promoted to General Manager of the Grand Ole Opry; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, his many and various talents were appropriately recognized when he was named President and Chief Executive Officer of WSM, Inc.; he subsequently held similar positions with Opryland USA and Gaylord Entertainment Company; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wendell's multitude of achievements in the entertainment and country music industries earned him honors as the Sales and Marketing Executives of Nashville, Inc.'s 1988 Nashville National Salesperson of the Year; and

WHEREAS, his numerous contributions to both the entertainment industry and the greater Nashville community have been recognized by the receipt of three major awards from the Nashville Symphony, the Nashville March of Dimes and Easter Seals; and

WHEREAS, he has also received the 1994 Distinguished American Award from the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame; the 1994 Governor's Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Nashville Mid-South Chapter; and the 1996 Distinguished Alumni Award from Wooster College; with his lovely wife, Janice Wendell, he was the co-winner of *Advantage Magazine's* 1989 Man of the Year and Woman of the Year honors; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wendell has given unselfishly of himself and his considerable talents and energies to provide leadership and funding for the Boy Scouts of America; and

WHEREAS, he presently serves with distinction as Chairman of the Boy Scouts' national finance and investment committee and as a member of the national executive board; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, he successfully chaired a fund-raising campaign that raised almost nine million dollars for the Middle Tennessee Council, the largest amount ever raised by a single Scout Council in the nation; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, Mr. Wendell received the Silver Buffalo Award, the Boy Scouts of America's highest honor, in appreciation of his meritorious service to the organization; and

WHEREAS, an active member of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, he served proficiently as Chairman of its Board of Governors in 1990; and

WHEREAS, Bud Wendell has contributed extensively to the prosperity of his company and his community, and his vision has led the way in establishing country music's burgeoning popularity around the world; and

WHEREAS, this estimable public servant and peerless professional should be specially recognized for living the examined life with liberality and courage; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and recognize E.W. "Bud" Wendell on the occasion of his retirement as President and Chief Executive Officer of Gaylord Entertainment Company; salute his superlative

career in the entertainment industry, which truly stands unparalleled; and commend his selfless dedication to the betterment of his community and the quality of life for his fellow citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we wish him all the best as he enjoys the fruits of a much deserved retirement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.